

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 217725

NODIS
FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG AND LEONARD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, UNGA, RQ, CU

SUBJECT:MEETING WITH CUBANS ON PUERTO RICO

1. IF THE CUBANS INITIATE A MEETING WITH YOU OVER THE WEEK-
END ON PUERTO RICO, WE ASSUME IT WILL BE FOR THE PURPOSE OF
HEARING WHAT WE HAVE TO SAY ON THE ISSUE AND WHAT OUR PRE-
CISE INTENDED ACTIONS ARE SO THEY CAN SHAPE THEIR RESPONSE.
WE BELIEVE THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT THE CUBANS WOULD BE
WILLING TO AVOID A CONFRONTATION ON THE ISSUE AND TO PLAY A
RESTRAINED ROLE, DEPENDING UPON THE CIRCUMSTANCES. THEY MAY
WANT TO EXPLAIN THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THAT COULD OCCUR.
WE UNDERSTAND THAT CUBANS CANNOT BE SEEN BACKING AWAY PUB-
LICLY FROM A "POSITION OF PRINCIPLE." WHAT WE HOPE IS THAT
WE CAN WORK WITH CUBA TO DEVELOP A PROCEDURE WHICH WILL EN-
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ABLE US TO MAINTAIN OUR POSITIONS WITHOUT CONFRONTING ONE
ANOTHER AS HAPPENED LAST YEAR.

2. WE APPRECIATE THAT YOU WILL SEEK TO MAKE THE MEETING NON-
CONFRONTATIONAL. HOPEFULLY IT MAY HELP US INDUCE A CON-
STRUCTIVE CUBAN POSTURE AND A WAY TO ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES
ON THIS ISSUE, SPECIFICALLY POSTPONEMENT. YOU SHOULD AP-

PROACH IT IN THAT LIGHT. IF THE CUBANS DO IN FACT SEEK TO ELICIT OUR VIEWS AND OPINIONS ON THE MATTER, THEREFORE, YOU SHOULD EXPLAIN OUR POINTS OF VIEW FRANKLY, MUCH AS YOU DID FOR ROA, POINTING OUT THAT THIS IS A MATTER OF DIRECT CONCERN TO THE PRESIDENT; THAT THE PRESIDENT'S DECLARATION IS A MOST IMPORTANT NEW DEVELOPMENT; AND THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS COMMITTED HIMSELF TO SUPPORT THE RESULT OF A STATUS REFERENDUM.

3. IF THEY HAVE ANY PROPOSALS OR SUGGESTIONS OF THEIR OWN YOU SHOULD ASSURE THEM THAT WE WOULD WANT TO WEIGH THEIR IDEAS CAREFULLY AND THAT THEY WILL BE GIVEN QUICK, CAREFUL AND HIGH LEVEL ATTENTION; YOU MAY ADD, IF IT IS APPROPRIATE, THAT WE WOULD APPRECIATE THEIR NOT PURSUING AN INITIATIVE ON PUERTO RICO PENDING OUR RESPONSE.

4. NEEDLESS TO SAY BECAUSE OF THE EXTREME SENSITIVITY OF THIS ISSUE AMONG THE VARIOUS POLITICAL GROUPS IN PUERTO RICO AND OUR NEED TO CONSIDER CAREFULLY THE FULL RAMIFICATIONS OF THE ISSUE AND THE CUBAN ATTITUDE AND POSITION, WE WILL WISH TO HANDLE THESE DISCUSSIONS CAREFULLY AND QUIETLY, AND TO BE SURE WE UNDERSTAND PRECISELY WHAT THEIR OBJECTIVES ARE.

CHRISTOPHER

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